

C. Remarks

The claims are 1-9, with claims 1 and 2 being independent. Claims 6 and 7 have been amended to address section 112, second paragraph, issues. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the present claims is expressly requested.

Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite.

While Applicants disagree with the Examiner's reasons for rejection, of claims 6 and 7, solely to expedite prosecution, these claims have been amended to reflect a more formal Markush group format. Accordingly, withdrawal of the indefiniteness rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,346,189 B1 (Dai). Claims 8 and 9 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being allegedly obvious from Dai.

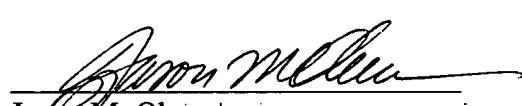
Applicants respectfully submit that Dai is not prior art. Specifically, Dai's earliest effective filing date appears to be August 14, 1998. The subject application is a division of U.S. Application No. 10/435,536, filed on May 12, 2003, which itself is a division of U.S. Application No. 09/178,680, filed on October 26, 1998. The latter, grand-parent application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119 from Japanese Patent Application No. 09-298373. This Japanese priority application was filed on October 30, 1997, which is prior to the August 14, 1998 earliest effective filing date of Dai. To perfect foreign priority under 37 C.F.R. § 1.55, Applicants submit herewith a sworn translation of the above-

mentioned Japanese priority application, which is believed to support the subject matter of the present claims. Accordingly, the above rejections over Dai should be withdrawn.

There being no other rejections or objections, Applicants respectfully request that the claims be allowed and that the case be passed to issue.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Jason M. Okun
Attorney for Applicants
Registration No. 48,512

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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